(b) whether the State Government has also approached the Ministry for allocation of extra gas for the existing Uran gas-based project, which is running under capacity for want of gas;

(c). whether the State Government has argued that an additional allocation of one MMSCMD would help to generate additional 250 MW currently; and

(d) if so, whether the Ministry has considered the request of Maharashtra Government to get the KG basin gas for Uran Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Government of Maharashtra has requested long-term supplies from Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)'s offshore field in KG basin for Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited (Maha Genco)'s proposed 1040 MW expansion of Gas based Combined Cycle Power Generation Project at Uran. Government of Maharashtra has also informed that the present project has an idle capacity of about 400 MW because of limited availability of natural gas. Government of Maharashtra has requested that 1.0 Million Standard Cubic Metres Per Day (MMSCMD) of Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (R-LNG) be supplied to the project at pooled price during the period from commissioning of the Panvel-Uran spurline to commencement of supply of gas by RIL, which would enhance production by 200 MW. RIL has indicated that they would supply 1.0 MMSCMD natural gas to MahaGenco for its Uran Power Plant.

Allocation of "Profit Gas" from KG basin to Andhra Pradesh

72. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh Government has made request/demand for providing it 50 per cent of 'Profit Gas' that is extracted from KG basin to meet its various demands;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a request to this effect has been received in this Ministry; and

(c) if so, what action the Ministry has taken on the above request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Central Government has accepted the recommendations of Twelfth Finance Commission to share Profit Petroleum (PP) arising out of onland contracts under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) with the concerned States in the ratio of 50:50. Therefore, this profit sharing will not be applicable to KG Basin offshore blocks.

Tourism project in villages

73. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken up rural tourism project to attract foreign tourists;

(b) if so, how may villages would be brought under the project in the first year and how . much money is earmarked for the purpose;

(c) whether the project involve the local people in setting up of infrastructural facilities; and

(d) if so, the details of infrastructural facilities set up and people trained in the villages of Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance to the State Governments/Union Territories including Uttar Pradesh for infrastructure development in rural sites under the Scheme of Product/ Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits. Activities pertaining to community participation and capacity building including skill upgradation in such rural sites are being supported through Government of India-United Nation's Development Programme Endogenous Tourism Project and the Capacity Building for Service Providers Scheme of the Ministry.

The objective is to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations and in villages, which have core-competencies such as culture, craft, handlooms and textile.

(b) An amount of Rs.333.75 lakh was sanctioned for seven rural tourism sites in the first year of the Tenth Plan.

(c) and (d) The details of Central Financial Assistance extended to Government of Uttar Pradesh for development of infrastructure facilities and capacity building of local communities are as follows:

(1) Rs. 49.52 lakh was sanctioned in the year 2005-06 for infrastructure Development at Bhitar Gram.

(2) Rs. 45.89 lakh was sanctioned in the year 2005-06 for infrastructure development at village Mukhrai.

(3) Rs. 50.00 lakh was sanctioned in the year 2007-08 for infrastructure development at village Bhaguwala.

(4) Rs. 20.00 lakh was sanctioned in the year 2004-05 for capacity building at village Bhaguwala.

Hot-air balloon tourism

74. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to start hot-air balloon tourism for commercial tourism purposes;

(b) if so, the.details thereof;

(c) the details of the State/regions where the project is proposed to be launched and whether it would also cover the Buddhist Centres of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) Development and promotion of tourist places/spots including promotion of adventure tourism/hot-air ballooning is primarily undertaken by the State Government/UT Administrations including Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. However, Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance to the State Governments/Union Torritories for development of tourism including adventure tourism,